

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~8th April, 1959COCOM Document No. 3474BCOORDINATING COMMITTEE

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RECORD OF DISCUSSIONONTHE EXPORT OF CABLES TO THE U.S.S.R.19th March, 1959

Present: Belgium (Luxembourg), Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States.

References: COCOM Documents 3436 and Addendum, 3444, 3450, 3451, 3452, 3464 and 3470.

1. In reply to a question by the Chairman, the FRENCH Delegate confirmed the position adopted by his authorities, namely, that once a licence had been issued it could not be withdrawn; he was nevertheless able to inform the Committee that this matter was now under discussion at a very high level and he undertook to transmit the result of those consultations as soon as he knew it.

2. The GERMAN Delegate said that his authorities would be most grateful to the French Government if they could withdraw the authorisation they had given. Being particularly concerned, in the face of the present situation, about the future of mutual cooperation in the field of strategic controls, the German authorities were ready to hold up all action on requests addressed to the German industry until the next discussion of the problem in the Committee. However, this decision, which had been taken reluctantly and in spite of very strong economic pressure, was subject to a similar undertaking by other interested Governments; it was obvious that such a concession by Germany would be useless unless the same attitude were adopted by the other participating countries. Thus, even if the French Government did not reconsider their decision, the German authorities would suspend all action until the 13th April on condition that the other countries gave the same assurance.

3. The ITALIAN and JAPANESE Delegates thanked their French colleague for undertaking to give the Committee speedy information as to the result of the consultations being undertaken by his authorities. They reserved their position on the German proposal until this result should be known.

4. The BELGIAN Delegate stated that his Government reserved the right to judge the expediency of granting the licence for which they had been asked. He would recommend to his authorities that they should wait until the 13th April to take a decision, but he was not in a position to foresee how they would receive the German proposal.

5. The UNITED STATES Delegate stated that the question at present under discussion was being studied by eminent authorities in his country. After noting with satisfaction that the French Government were examining the problem afresh at a high level, the Delegate expressed the hope that positive results would be achieved. The United States Delegation were grateful to the German authorities for the attitude they had decided to adopt despite the commercial pressures and internal difficulties to which this matter had doubtless given rise; they hoped that the other Member Governments would be in a position to support the German proposal and that by the 13th April the Committee would be able to establish a more satisfactory situation.

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6. The GERMAN Delegate stressed that on the 13th April the Committee would need not only to solve the question of the definitions involved but, should the French Government not have withdrawn the licence which had been issued, the Committee would also have to take into consideration various other requests concerning the same material.

7. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of Delegations to the possible gravity of any action taken by a Member Government up to the reopening of the discussion. He invited Delegations to ask for instructions as to the positions which they would have to adopt in the two eventualities of a positive or a negative reply from the French Government.

8. The JAPANESE Delegate stated that he would report the Committee's proceedings to his Government, but that he was not in a position to ask for fresh instructions without taking the French position into account. The Delegate expressed his lively appreciation of the German Delegation's efforts to safeguard the uniform application of the controls, but he stressed that, in the absence of an indication to the contrary, one Member Government was taking unilateral action, and it seemed difficult in consequence to insist that other Member Governments should make a gratuitous sacrifice.

9. The FRENCH Delegate, replying to his Japanese colleague's final observation, underlined the fact that there had not been unilateral action on the part of the French Government, but a decision to export upon the advice of highly qualified experts who had reached the conclusion that the items concerned were not of a strategic nature. It should be borne in mind that in order to safeguard uniformity of application of the controls, the French Government had undertaken not to accept new orders for an item which they still considered harmless, until such time as unanimous agreement should be reached in the Committee.

10. In the course of a further exchange of views it appeared that the BELGIAN, ITALIAN and JAPANESE Delegations were not able to enter into a firm undertaking on behalf of their Governments to suspend all action on the requests they had received; these Delegations nevertheless undertook to forward to their authorities without delay the result of the day's discussion.

11. The COMMITTEE agreed to resume the debate on the 23rd March, by which date they hoped to have information as to the decision taken by the French Government.

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